

**BIG RIVER**  
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Research, "Chainsaw Planning"® & Training

P.O. Box 5120 • St. Cloud, MN 56302-5120 • (800) 500-7017 • Fax (320) 202-1010 • [www.bigrivergroup.com](http://www.bigrivergroup.com)

## **City of Willmar • Council & City Leaders Retreat**

**January 11, 2019 • Bremer Bank • 3:00 to 7:00 PM**

### **ID Recent Successes & Issues**

- Results – Last Five Years

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### **ID Beliefs**

- Beliefs re: Serving Citizens & Communicate/Work Together

Page 2

### **ID Preferences re: "Council 2.0"**

- Designing Change: Preferences

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### **Closure – Friday Session**

- Session Evaluations

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**January 12, 2019 • Bremer Bank • 9:00 AM to Noon**

### **Topic: City Hall Building**

- Designing Change; Preferences

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### **ID Future Work**

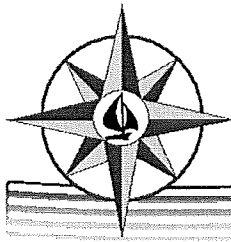
- Types of Future Work

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### **Closure – Saturday Session**

- Session Evaluations

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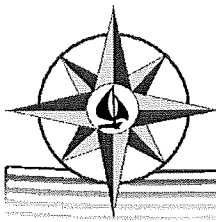
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**City of Willmar, MN • Council & City Leaders Retreat**  
**January 11, 2019 • Bremer Bank • Recent Successes & Issues**

	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Less Than Positive</b>
<b>Intended</b>	1) 2018 Accomplishments 2) Industrial Park 3) Local Option Sales, CVB fishing tournament 4) Park Projects 5) Carris Health 6) Recreation Department 7) Project Manager position' 8) Human Resource Director 9) Annual streets and infrastructure 10) Wye Project	1) Insurance changes 2) City hall stalled out 3) Facility study follow up 4) Miller park playground 5) Weather related project delays 6) Loss of partnership with school for CER 7) Eagle lake WWTP 8) Municipal utilities district heat discontinuation 9) Western storm sewer over budget 10) City auditorium no decision 11) Work sessions 12) Number of administrators
<b>Unintended</b>	1) Rockin' Robbins 2) Carris health 3) Light of the world display 4) Community involvement for destination playground 5) Newcomer businesses downtown 6) Positive new hires & in PW 7) Eagle Lake sanitary sewer 8) LOST 9) Baker Field lights 10) Main street grant 11) Highway 23 funding/coalition 12) Separation of park and recreation with school	1) Street flooding 2) Loss of business in the mall 3) Pending retirements loss of experience 4) Labor issues 5) Lead abatement auditorium 6) Disapportionment of ..... 7) Early retirement program 8) Morale, salaries, and succession planning 9) Meeting structure/communications 10) Separation of Parks & Rec 11) SRO agreement & additional cost 12) Cambridge drainage



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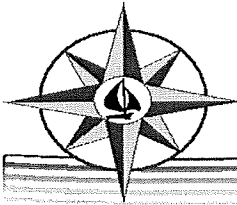
## **City of Willmar, MN • Council & City Leaders Retreat January 11, 2019 • Bremer Bank • Beliefs Worksheet**

### **Your Beliefs: Serving Citizens**

- Professional Customer Service
- Providing service in a manner that is in the best long-term interest of the community
- Listen to constituents with an open mind
- Make decisions with the greatest impact and follow through
- Efficiency
- Open-mindedness
- Equity and inclusion
- Use existing structures and resources in a fiscally responsible manner
- Trust
- Keep constituencies informed
- Timely public safety response
- Transparency
- Be positive
- Adhere to our values statements

### **Your Beliefs: How We Communicate & Work Together**

- Be respectful
- Approach questioning and challenging with positive intent
- Trust
- Honesty and openness
- Transparency
- Encourage others
- New ideas can come from anywhere
- Staff meetings
- Policy governance
- Open meeting laws have driven a wedge between staff and elected officials by stifling casual conversation
- Eliminate factions and micromanagement
- Refer work to committees
- Encourage others
- We are on the same team
- One on one meetings



## City of Willmar, MN • 2019 Council & City Leaders Retreat

### Designing Change: "Council 2.0"

#### Effective Roles

- Stay at the policy level
- Make decisions and give clear expectations
- Demonstrate respect for staff & for their opinions
- Be visionary & futuristic
- Limit effects of negative influences & special interest groups

#### Council Basics

- Read the packet, reports & briefs
- Attend meetings
- Return calls & e-mails
- Make calls or request info prior to meeting
- Come prepared & be accountable

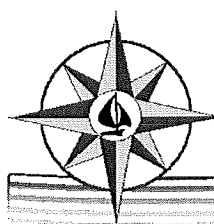
#### Effective Behaviors

- Accept decisions made
- Deal with personal conflicts with the person
- Agree to disagree & move forward for the City
- Non-adversarial questioning
- Trust & assume positive intent
- Honesty, integrity & transparency
- No personal agendas & avoid cliques outside of meetings
- Hold inclusive conversations
- Listen for understanding
- Be actively involved

### ***Effective & Efficient City Council***

#### Effective Structures

- Develop formats & timelines for meetings
- Have committees in place
- Committee chairs need to meet with staff in advance to develop agenda & topics
- Develop protocols where needed



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## **City of Willmar, MN • Council & City Leaders Retreat January 11, 2019 • Bremer Bank • 3:00 to 7:00 PM**

### **1) What was good & productive about this session?**

- Small groups seemed to be very productive
- We got a lot of information out on the floor. My worry is that it will go to waste because items won't change
- Small groups and open conversation. Almost everyone participated
- I found this very productive and informative. I feel what was discussed will help us to move forward in a positive way, and I can catch myself if negative thinking towards others occurs
- Sharing of ideas. Good diagrams to work with
- I think everyone's intentions are good, but we are scratching the surface on some of the issues regarding trust
- The small breakout groups were critical to the success of the evening
- Good exchange of philosophies, needs, and direction
- We got to meet with staff and council
- Defining direction and discussion of council expectations
- Many good comments and ideas were brought forward-hopefully it makes people think and realize areas that need to be worked on
- Required feedback from the entire group
- Starting a thought process to improve communication
- Everyone was very friendly

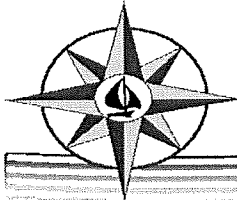
### **2) What was your biggest discovery?**

- How similar everyone responded to the designing change exercise
- We have a trust issue. We don't work as a team
- We acknowledged our need for open communication, respect
- Pretty much everything!
- The department heads prefer committees
- We all want to be respected
- Staff and council beginning to open up about some of the issues
- More commonality than anticipated
- We have some fragile council people
- Nothing really new

- Common thoughts on communication between staff and council
- Council has a lot of the same values and goals as staff. And a lot of the same frustrations
- More open than I thought we would be

### 3) **How would you improve the session?**

- Not allow outside videotaping
- More input from council members. I wish there was more input from the council
- Make sure there is more representation in groups. We had three people with the same role in our last group. It was nice in earlier breakouts having diversity.
- It was good
- It seemed effective
- One more hour. Let's really get honest, down to brass tacks. I feel some mistrust may continue if not brought into the open.
- Have more individual input versus small groups
- Body language should improve for some
- Remove the camera
- No videotaping
- Force the councilors to speak up



## **City of Willmar, MN • 2019 Council & City Leaders Retreat**

### **Designing Change: Site Location for New City Hall**

#### **Features and Amenities**

- Council Chambers onsite
- Access to technology
- Rental business?
- Connected to Auditorium (Historical Building)
- 'One stop shop'
- High end residential?

#### **Form and Function**

- Co-locate with utility administration
- Public safety heads co-located with others
- Interdepartmental efficiency
- All city departments under one roof?
- Determine footprint and size

### **Site for New City Hall**

#### **Accessibility**

- Parking
- Traffic Flow- Easy to get to
- Visibility

#### **Miscellaneous**

- Stimulate other economic development
- A new 'legacy'
- Least amount of tax loss
- Give clear direction to staff re: Auditorium



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**January 12, 2019 • Bremer Bank • Three Types of Future Work**

**Implementing**

*(Priorities - Few Items)*

**Reviewing**

*(Some Items to Consider)*

**Considering**

*(Other Items)*

- |    |                                     |   |
|----|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1) | *Clarify our message to legislature | * Walleye stock   |
| 2) | *Garfield storm water pond          | *Move City employees prior to new building?               |
| 3) | *Southeast storm water pond         | *Training- Board, City, and communication                 |
| 4) | *Phase 2- Baker Field               | *Department level reports                                 |
| 5) | *Update storm water master plan     | *Parks Master plan  |
|    | *Robbin's - shelter                 | *External partners- Auditorium                            |
|    | *Financial                          | *Expectations and succession planning (review and update) |
|    | *Specifics of Sales tax projects    |   |



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### **1) What was good & productive about this session?**

- Good info
- Honesty
- We heard a lot of information, now we have to finish it
- We got work done
- Open communication
- Respect
- Open conversation and a willingness to share
- Informal discussion
- Got to know about stormwater and projects
- We were able to get work done
- City Hall is going to be downtown
- Everyone was honest
- A lot of good discussion
- Came to a consensus that city offices should be downtown so hopefully this can be moved forward
- Good discussion from all – staff and council
- Heard from every council member before someone else was allowed to speak a second or third time
- Storm water and City Hall discussions
- Council consensus on a number of topics
- Open sharing and respectful dialogue

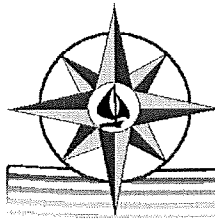
### **2) What was your biggest discovery?**

- More trust – maybe
- We have a lot to do
- We need to keep holding all of us accountable

- There is consensus on building the city offices downtown
- There is apparently a conflict behind the scenes that I am not aware of
- We all agree City Hall should be downtown
- Storm water project
- Not much, appeared not to resolve or have the ability for resolving confusion
- Committee structure
- Council has issues with handing responsibility to staff. This is huge and this hasn't change from the past - trust issues remain
- Consensus on committee and City Hall location
- Council agrees City Hall is downtown
- Council agrees to go back to committees
- The consensus is often unknown when it is actually achieved

### **3) How would you improve the session?**

- More time
- More time for discussion topics
- More time
- Deal with some specific topics
- Longer. Each department can talk about priorities and projects
- Get more stuff done
- More time is needed to have good conversations
- Could have done this in one full day
- Good discussion but confusion and lack of agreement - never addressed trust and honesty issues
- Starting time of committee structure, there is still a difference of opinion
- Difficulty agreeing on many items
- Small group breakouts on the second day as well
- More time to dive deeper into topics
- More staff input



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### **Notes Re: Public Works Info to be Shared With Council**

- Clarification – where tax dollars & water bill dollars go
  - Clear & concise verbiage
- Have staff generate list of ideas re: Funding mechanisms
- Look into funding work / projects done by other Cities:
  - Elk River project
  - Mankato
  - St. Louis Park
- Have staff rank possible ideas
- ID any potential liability issues re: Fencing & signage around ponds
- Information re: Moving forward on Public Works Master Plan
  - Sub projects, streets, stormwater
- Assemble & present “Best Practices” from other cities on these topics